



"A Cake and an ill custome must be broken"

write to: Mothers News c/o Rhododendron Festival PO Box 29081 Providence RI 02909
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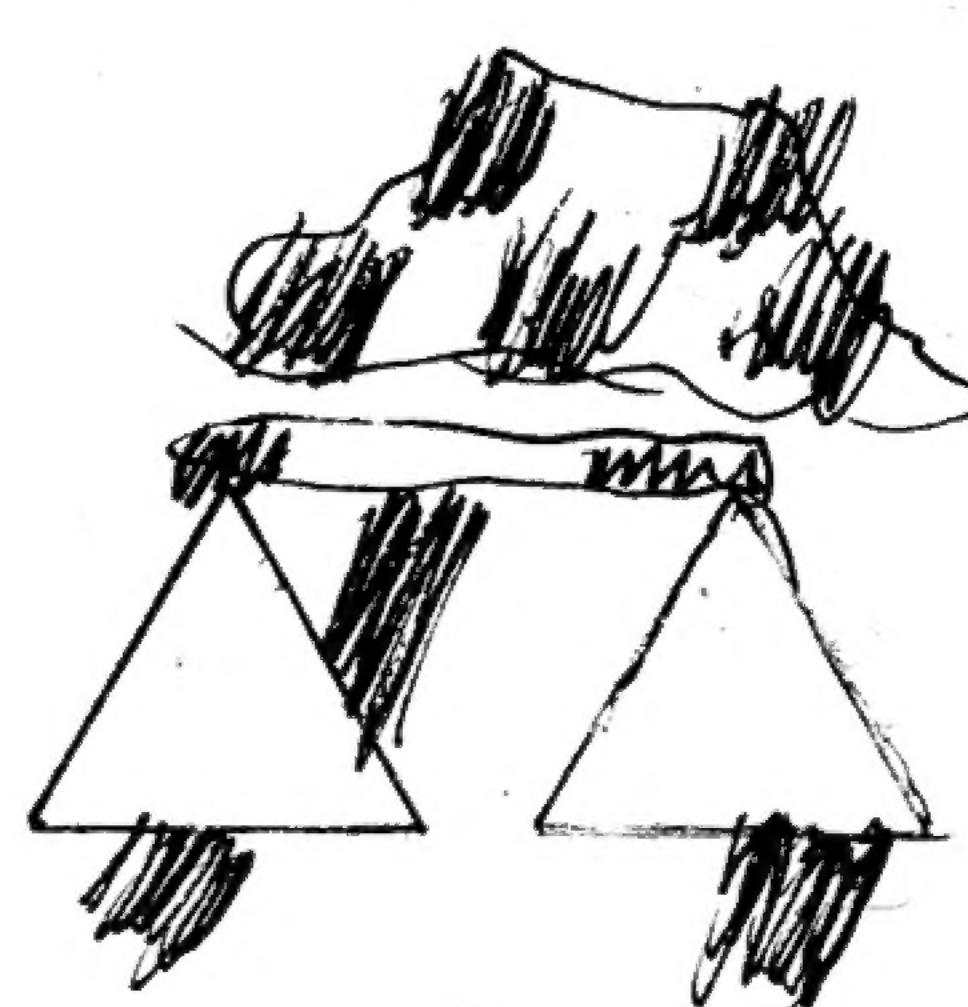
HI OR WHATEVER

Welcome to February, Cabbage Month, Mud Month, "Month of the Pearl". A month of purification but not necessarily refinement. February used to be the last month of the year, then around 450 BC it became the second month. WHICH IS FINE. But moving purification to the SECOND step? Kind of a weird move right? Kind of? I don't know, maybe it makes sense.

HOLIDAYS IN FEBRUARY

Groundhog day is a real thing in which an animal arbiter is called in to decide when spring is going to "really" start. Will it be on Imbolc (the feast day of Brighid), or will it be on the proper vernal equinox? Noncompatible measurement protocols, calendrical intersections... this is the sort of othering bullshit that people cuss out their neighbors over- 10th century politicos had it right to defer to a common garden pest and be done with it!

The Lupercalis used to take place from the 13th to the 15th, when youths and magistrates would run bare ass naked through the town and (according to Plutarch) "strike those they meet with shaggy thongs" which is good luck for those struck. This went on FINE until the 5th century when Pope Gelasius I led a campaign against it, ending the luckiness of people. Now they got Valentine's Day on the 14th, that sucks.



BRING BACK THE SHAGGY THONGS!

OK, so Lupercalia is named after the cave where the she-wolf lived who nurtured and fed the two identical twins that founded your particular city state. You... are free to take this as allegory. As Martin Buber said in "Ten Rungs" (extrapolating upon God's address to Abraham), "First, get you out of your country, that means the dimness you have inflicted on yourself. Then out of your birthplace, that means out of the dimness your mother inflicted on you. After that, out of the house of your father, that means out of the dimness your father inflicted on you. Only then will you be able to go to the land that I will show you.". So let's not split hairs in re: God concepts or in re: statehood- basically if you want to go to the land (aka west, aka the direction of change, aka the biggest direction there is), go where the wolf sucks, and suck it. If you're not down with that, crumple up this newspaper and throw it on the ground right now.

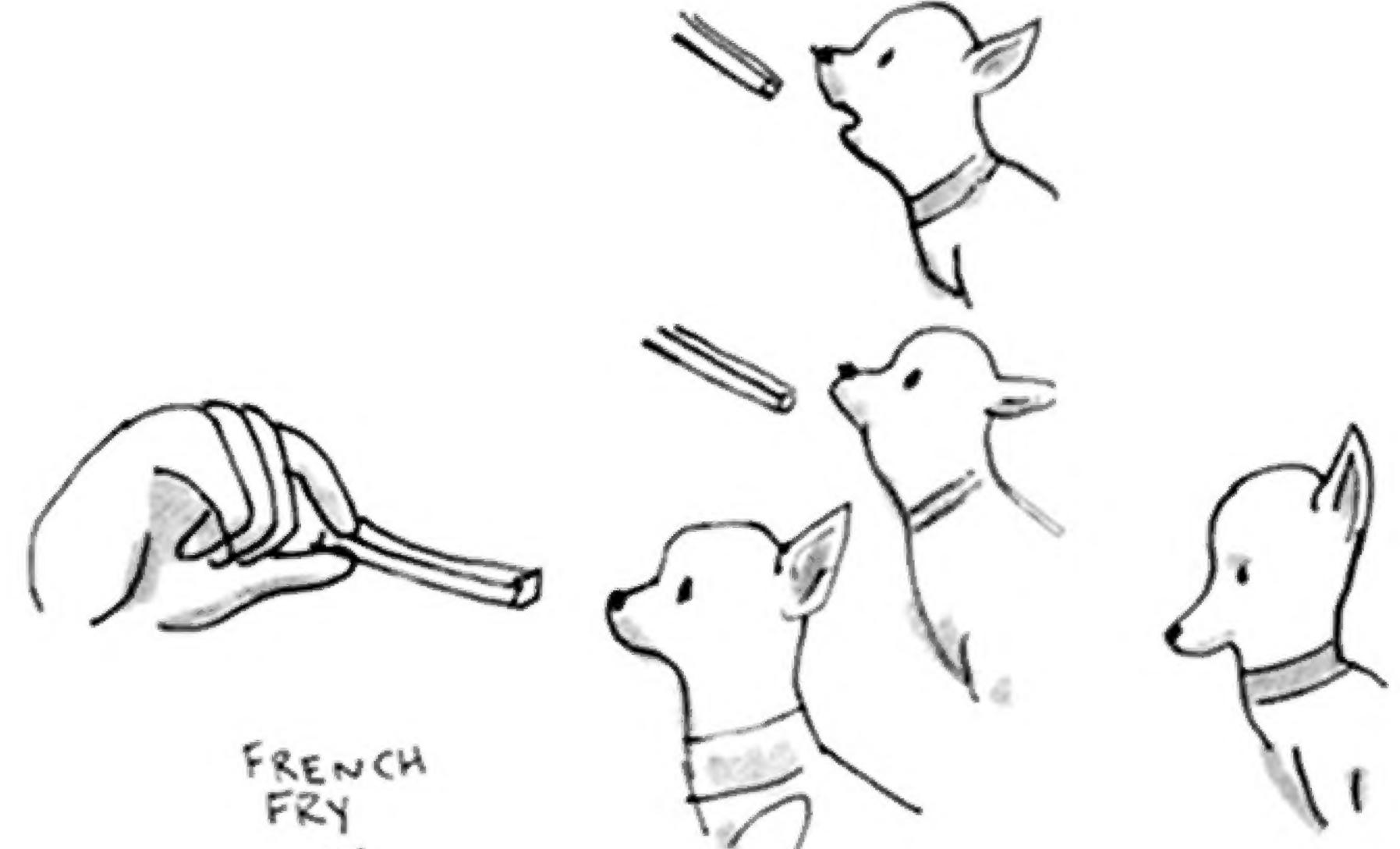
OK. Now that we've defined our terms, and we know, basically, what it is we're even celebrating (freedom from the known + general fertility), how do we go even celebrate Lupercalia? there's some dog sacrifice, for which I think hot dogs (or barring that, Devil Dogs) would suffice. There's some goat sacrifice, but I that's basically allegory too (GOAT = Greatest Of All Time). The important thing is that you race around almost naked, and you whip hangers-around with a piece of the sacrifice (which in the case of Devil Dogs would be a cellophane wrapper? I don't know, you'll have to improvise something). So you can either race around, or you can put yourself in harm's way and try to get struck (which is good luck and cures barrenness of all sorts). These are the ways to do it. Also, laughter plays some sort of key role. Also, this is kind of "duh", but "the origins [of Lupercalia] are lost in antiquity and may even predate civilization.". Which translates to "the human race has never needed an excuse to run around naked, any old excuse will do.". Again, this is February 13th to the 15th. If you are in high school you might get expelled for this, unless you ask your English teacher if you can do an extra project relating to Julius Caesar (act 1), then you'll get extra credit, or at least there will be extenuating circumstances.



THIS JUST IN

THEE AMBROSE BIERCE MEMORIAL WORD JUMBLE

by Ambrose Bierce before he died



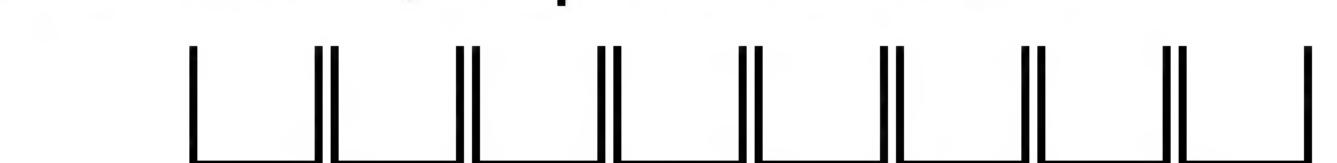
EDRAO To venerate expectantly.



BORTEREMA An ingenious instrument which indicates what kind of weather we are having.



ANOITLAR Devoid of all delusions save those of observation, experience and reflection.



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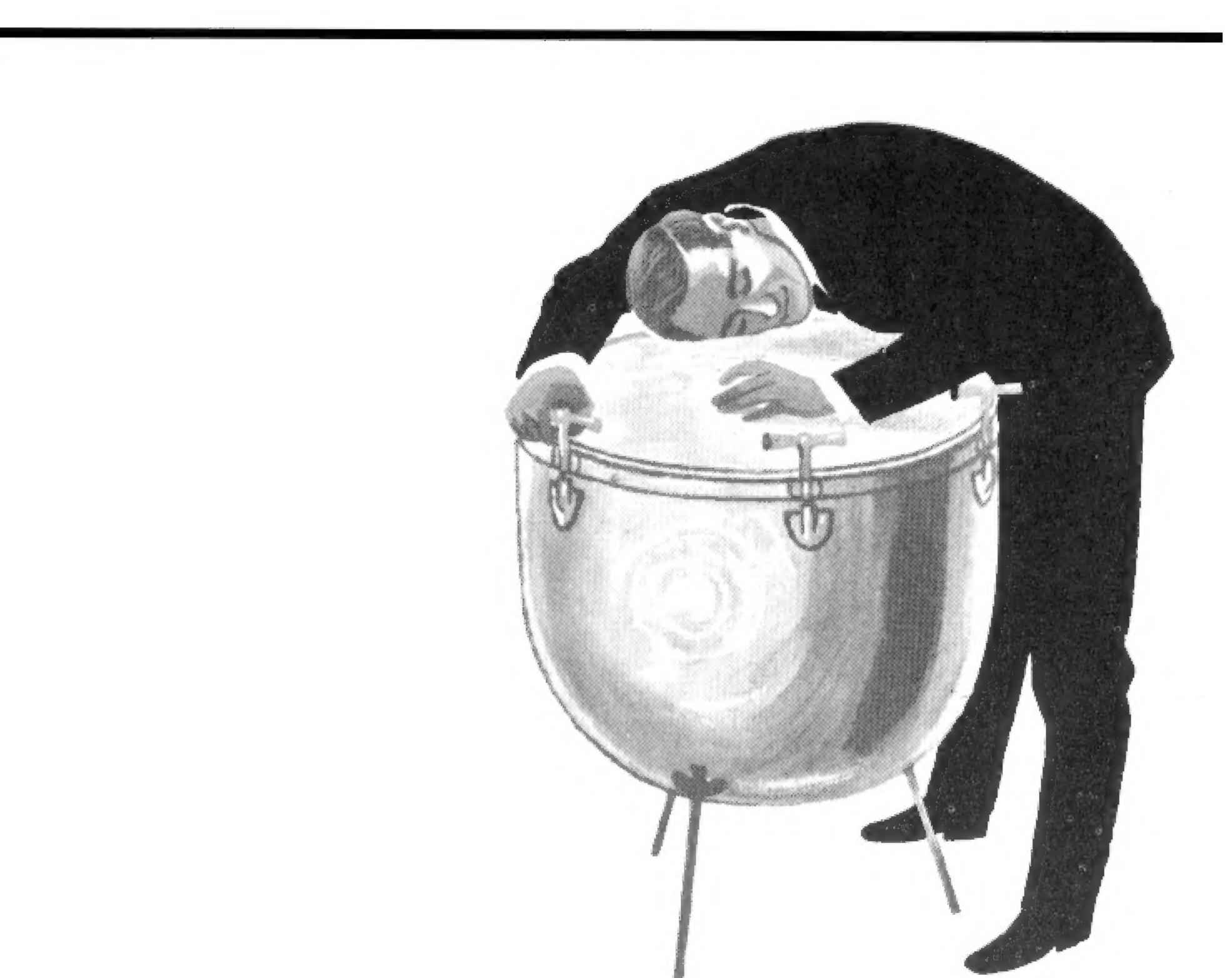
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